

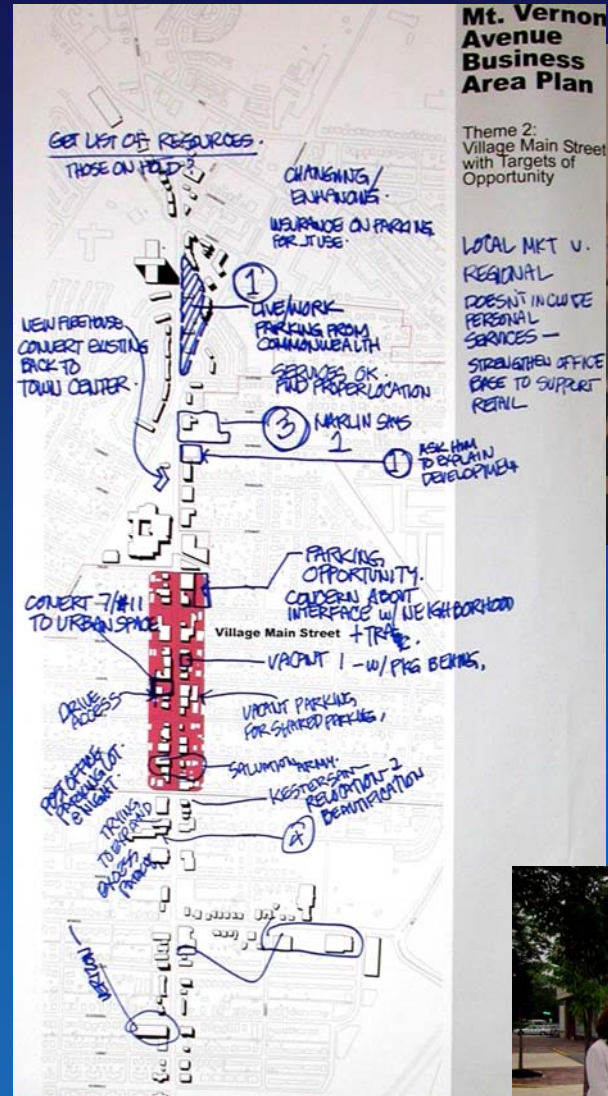


Mt. Vernon Avenue Business Plan



Department of Planning & Zoning

Planning Process



Mt. Vernon Avenue Business Area Plan

Theme 2: Village Main Street with Targets of Opportunity

LOCAL MKT V. REGIONAL DOESN'T INCLUDE PERSONAL SERVICES — STRENGTHEN OFFICE BASE TO SUPPORT RETAIL



Mission Statement

Mount Vernon Avenue is a vibrant and welcoming Main Street that reflects the surrounding neighborhoods' diversity, integrity and small-town charm. The Avenue is comprised of enthusiastic, successful and responsible community partners. We offer an eclectic and friendly living, working and shopping environment for Alexandrians and visitors alike.

***There is still a Main Street....
It's called the Avenue***



Guiding Principles

- Enhance the Avenue as a vibrant commercial corridor
- Celebrate the Town of Potomac Historic District
- Preserve existing historic scale and character
- Enhance public spaces
- Preserve and protect residential areas
- Encourage and support mixed use development
- Provide alternative multimodal transportation linkages
- Provide convenient parking and transportation solutions to support retail growth
- Promote partnerships
- Encourage independent retail
- Capitalize on the neighborhood arts community



Mt. Vernon Avenue Plan Summary

Provides opportunity for businesses to grow while enhancing the Avenue and protecting the neighborhoods

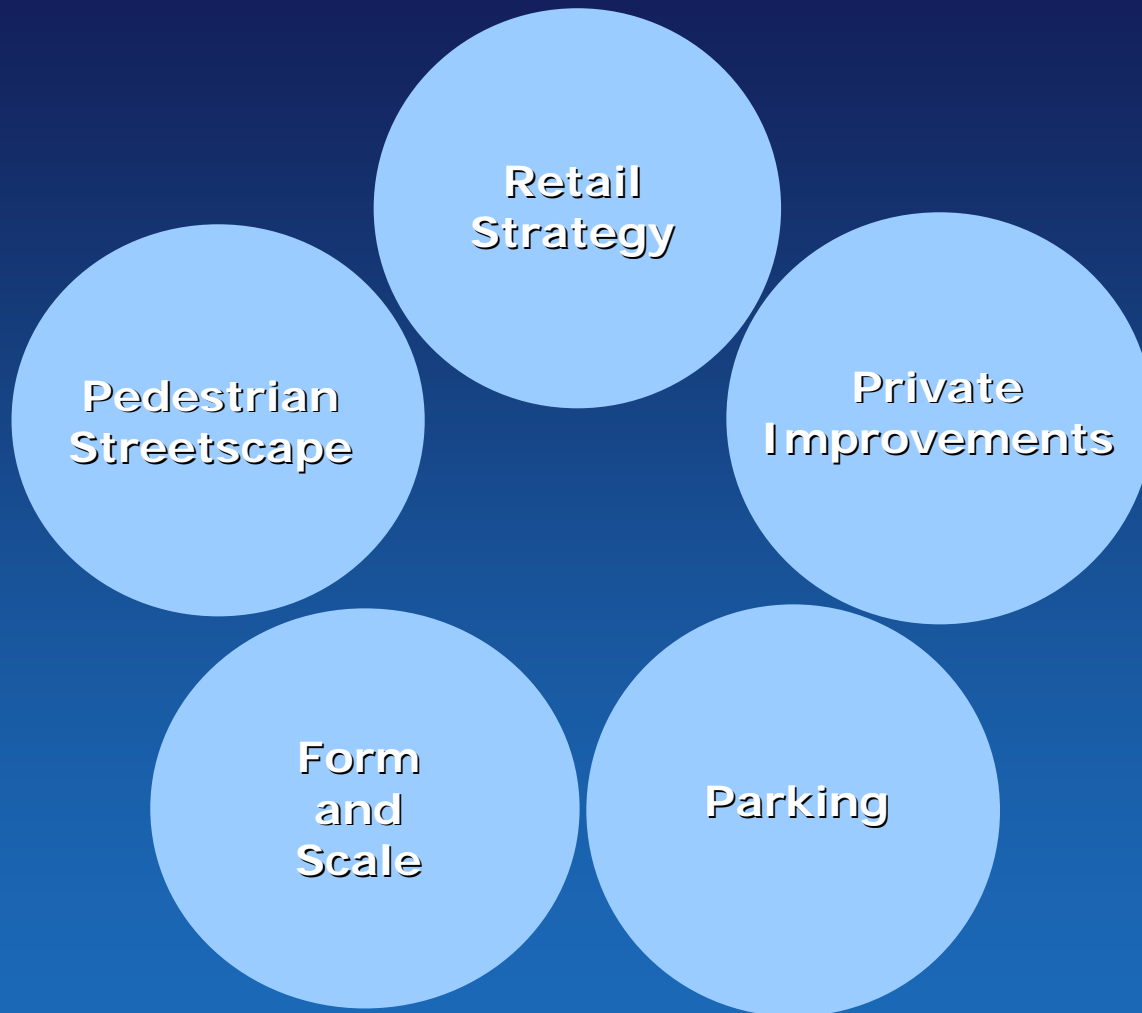
Establishes three focus areas for the plan

- **Focus Area 1 - Protect and Enhance the Historic Core**
 - Retail strategy, streetscape strategy, infill strategy, parking strategy
- **Focus Area 2 - Capitalize on Infill Development Opportunities and Streetscape Improvements North and South of the Core**
 - Retail strategy, streetscape strategy, infill strategy, parking strategy
- **Focus Area 3 - Plan for the Long-term Development of the Monroe Gateway**
 - Prepare for changes related to Potomac Yard and Route 1

Creates a Public – Private Implementation Strategy



Mt. Vernon Avenue Components





Market/Retail Strategy



Market Study

Projected demand for approx. 10% additional "Main Street" retail/restaurant space by 2010

- Study looks at unique and eclectic stores not competing with larger chain stores
- Strongest demand is for restaurants
- Also demand for Convenience Goods and Home Furnishings stores.

Target complementary businesses:

- *Restaurants*
 - Diner, family-style restaurant, and restaurant with entertainment and/or arts component
- *Specialty foods*
 - Gourmet foods, meat/fish market, confectionaries
- *Home furnishings*
 - Stores offering unique products not available elsewhere
- *Antiques/art galleries*
- *Art supplies*



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Retail Design Strategy

Good design increases consumer interest and creates a unique community identity

Facade and Landscaping Improvements

- Signage, painting, and architectural enhancements
- More landscaping between storefronts and sidewalks
- Encourage store window lighting in evening hours



Outdoor Restaurant Seating

- Creates a vibrant street atmosphere



Building Design Guidelines

- Preferred width of a storefront is 20 to 30', maximum of 50'
- Minimum depth of a retail store to be 50', or the depth of the building if less than 50'



Arts Strategy

Promote the Arts along Mt. Vernon Avenue

- Partner w/ local arts groups (i.e., Del Ray Artisans, Art League, etc.) to promote arts
- Establishing art studios, either in a single building, or dispersed along the Avenue
- Public art
- More festivals and arts promotions
- Art supply store



Multimodal Strategy

Use a Multimodal strategy to support and enhance the pedestrian-oriented nature of the Avenue and the neighborhood to include:

- Transit
- Walking/Bicycling
- Parking



Transit Ridership

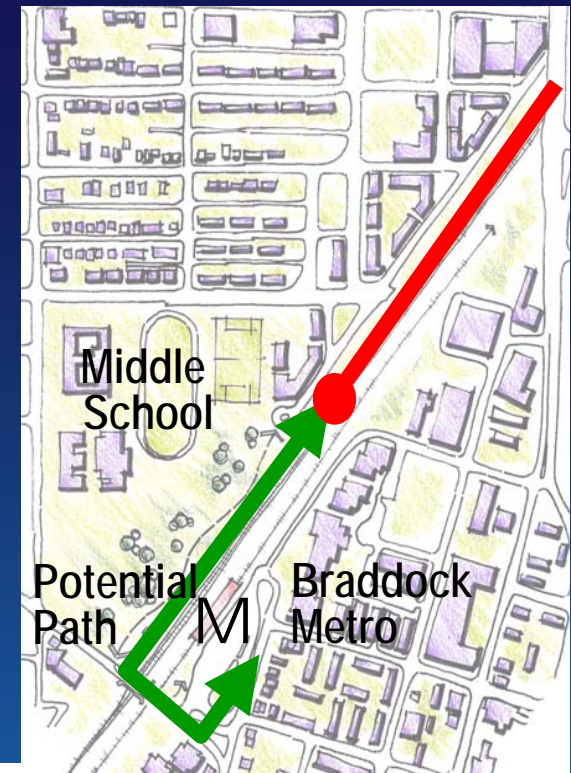
- DASH service
- Benches/Shelters/Schedules

Safer Pedestrian Connections

- Braddock Rd Metro
- Streetscape/Lighting

Reduce Speeding/Increase
Pedestrian Safety along 4
lane section of Mt. Vernon
north of Commonwealth
Avenue

Pedestrian-oriented infl
and new development





Focus Areas



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Mt. Vernon Avenue Plan Focus Areas

1

Historic Core

Uhler to Bellefonte Avenue

2

**Uhler Avenue to Herbert Street
Bellefonte to Luray Avenue**

3

Monroe Gateway

4

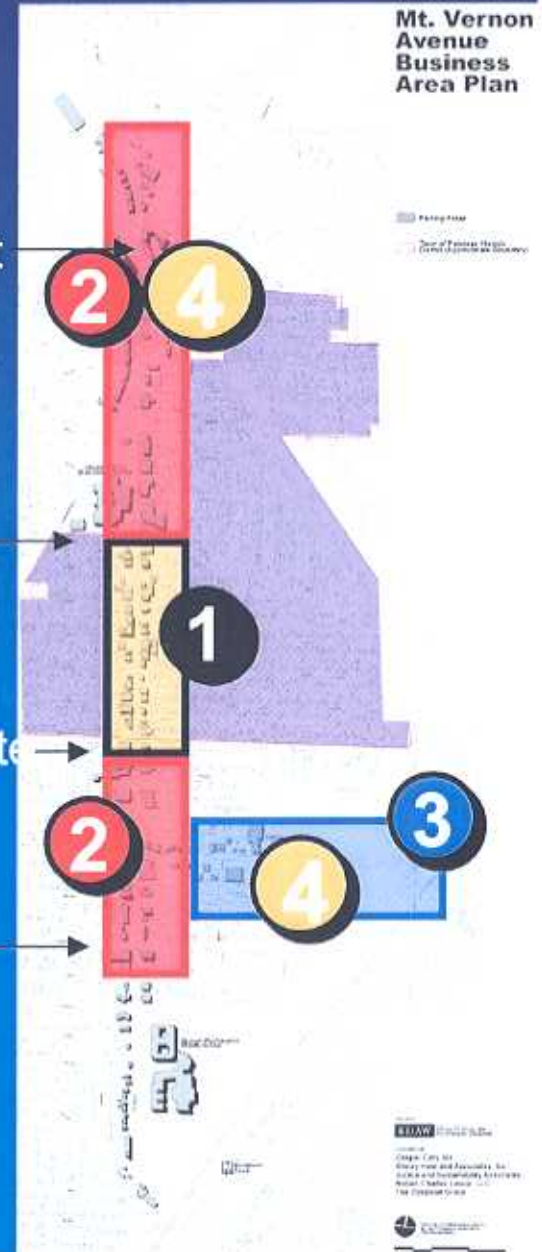
Opportunity Sites
•Giant/CVS
•Triangle

Herbert

Uhler

Bellefonte

Luray



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1

Historic Core

Key Elements

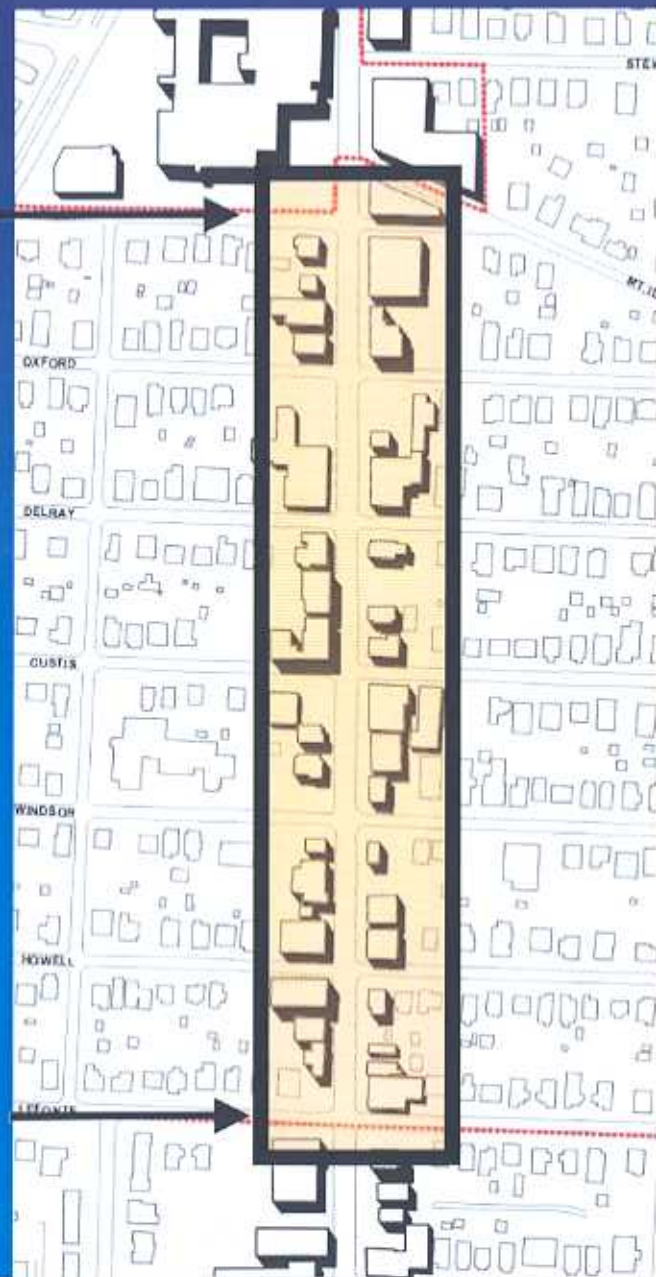
- **Historic Buildings**
- **Similar Mass and Scale**
- **Retail required at ground level**
- **Ensure infill development is compatible with the street by using a form approach that defines the volume, mass, and scale of new buildings**
- **Protect adjacent residences**
- **Implement a coordinated parking strategy**

Uhler

Bellefonte



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2

Uhler to Herbert & Bellefonte to Luray

Key Elements

- Streetscape/sidewalk improvements to Luray
- Encourage façade and site enhancements
- Improve pedestrian connections to Metro
- Encourage compatible infill based on form and design guidelines

Herbert

2

Uhler

Bellefonte

2

Nelson

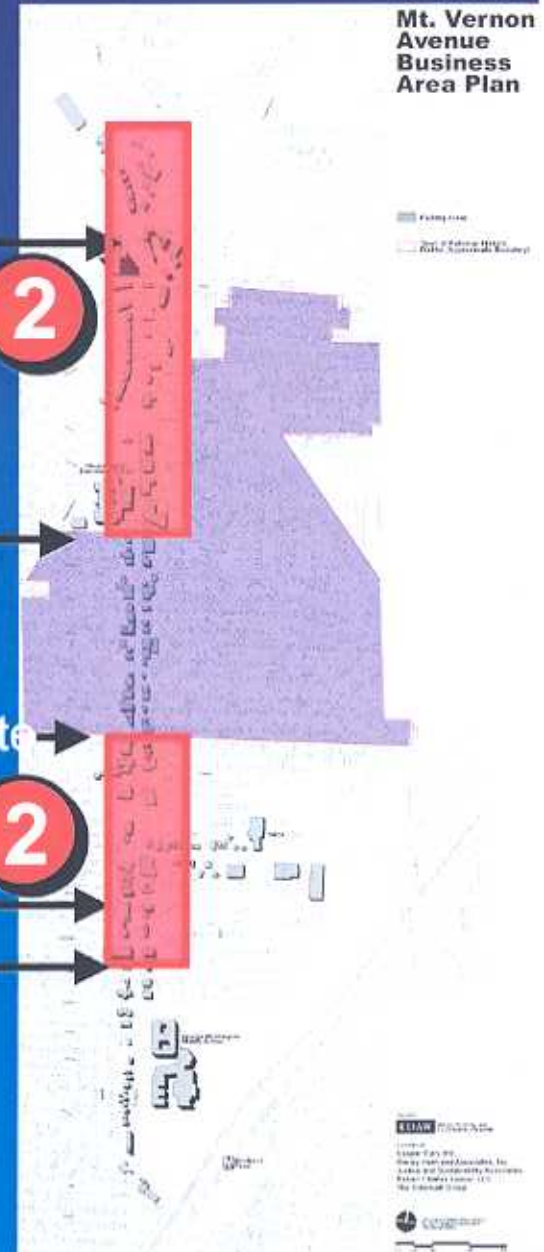
Luray

Mt. Vernon
Avenue
Business
Area Plan



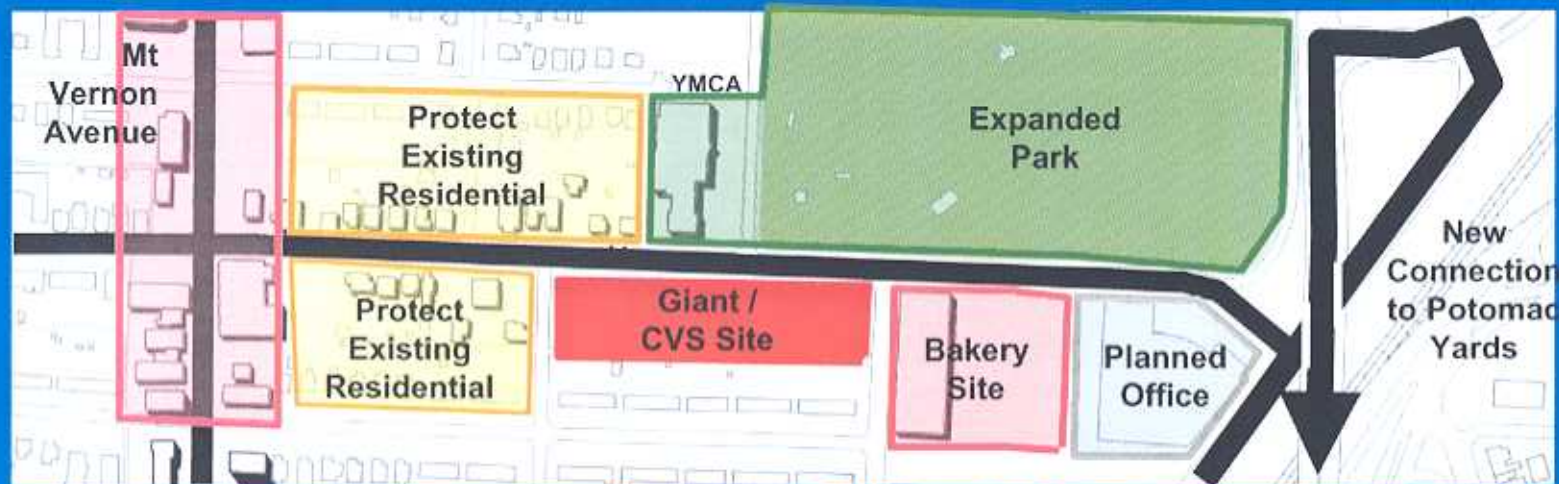
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3 Long-Term Vision for Monroe Avenue Gateway

- Create a gateway into Del Ray in coordination with the Route 1 Bridge improvements
- Protect and enhance the residential areas along Monroe Avenue
- Strengthen linkages to Braddock Road Metro station in coordination with the Route 1 Improvements
- Establish a vision for future use and development of Giant / CVS Site



Desired uses

- Grocery store with pharmacy
- Other retail uses on ground floor
- Residential and/or office on upper floors

Allow modest increase in FAR with SUP and compliance with performance standards

- Building height limited to three stories with stepdowns to ensure compatibility with scale of adjacent buildings and residential to the south
- Ground level public usable open space
- Underground parking
- On-site affordable housing
- Architectural quality



Triangle Site

Desired uses

- Residential and/or office
- Modest ground floor retail

Allow modest increase in FAR in compliance with performance goals:

- Limit height to 3 stories on Mt. Vernon Avenue, stepping down to residential
- New development provides open space on the site
- Buildings complement existing Avenue character
- Construct underground structured parking to meet site parking requirements of development
- Provide affordable housing



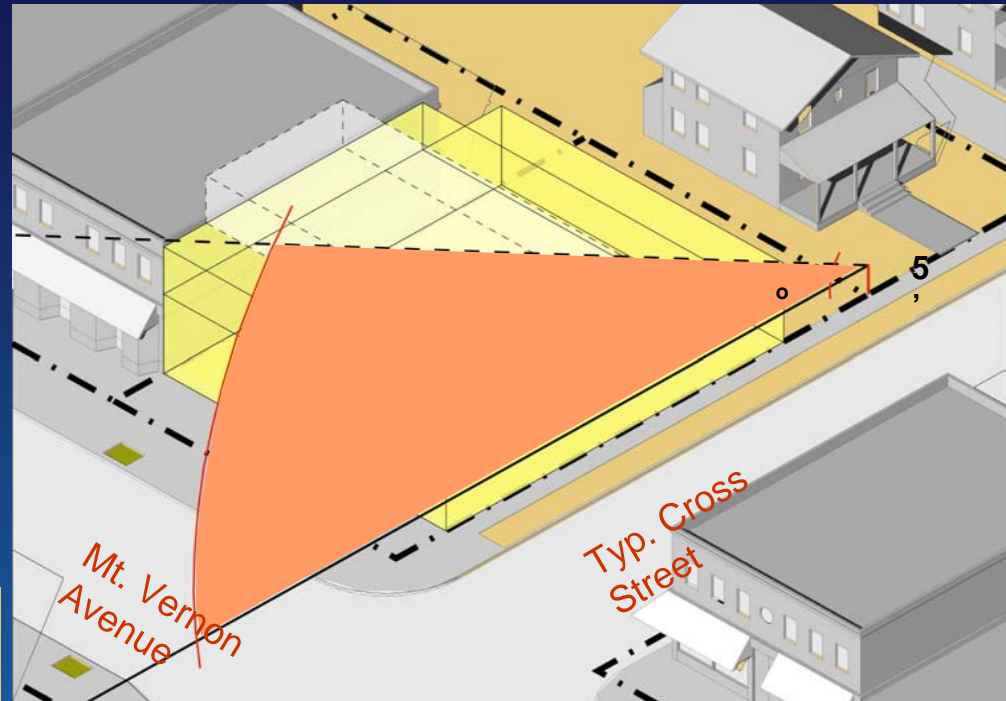
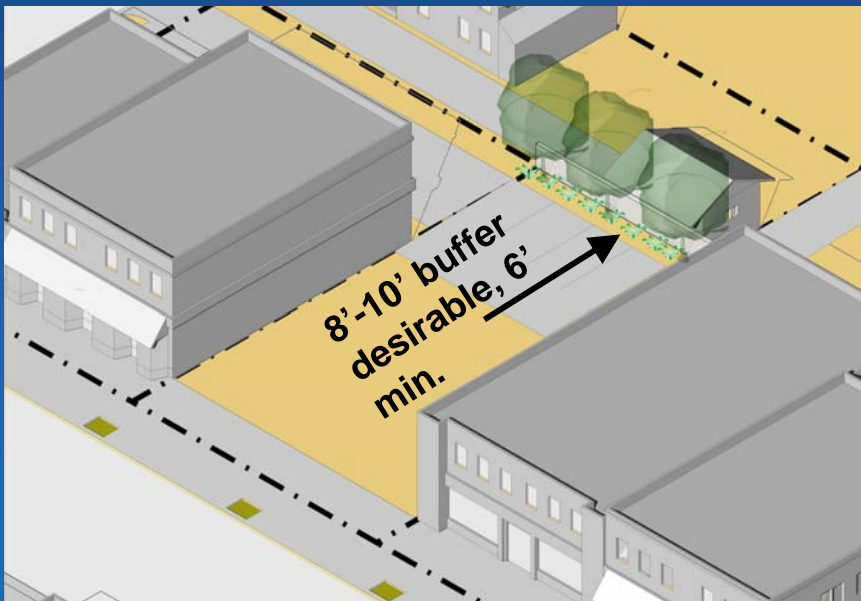
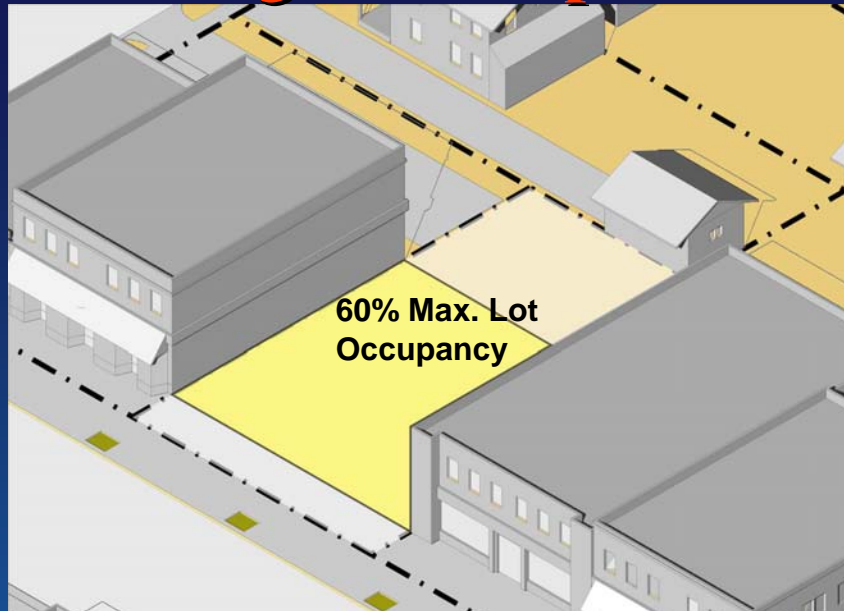


Form and Scale



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Design Principles to Determine Form and Scale



60% Lot Coverage

Building Massing

- Building massing and height may not exceed 28 degree sun angle measured from 5' above the ground at the rear property line

Buffer to protect adjacent residences



Design Principles to Determine Form and Scale

New construction compatible with existing mass and scale

New construction, with ground level retail storefronts should wrap corners



Curb cuts are strongly discouraged on Mount Vernon Avenue



Step back from back and front for third floor

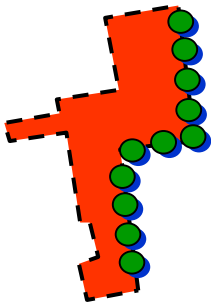
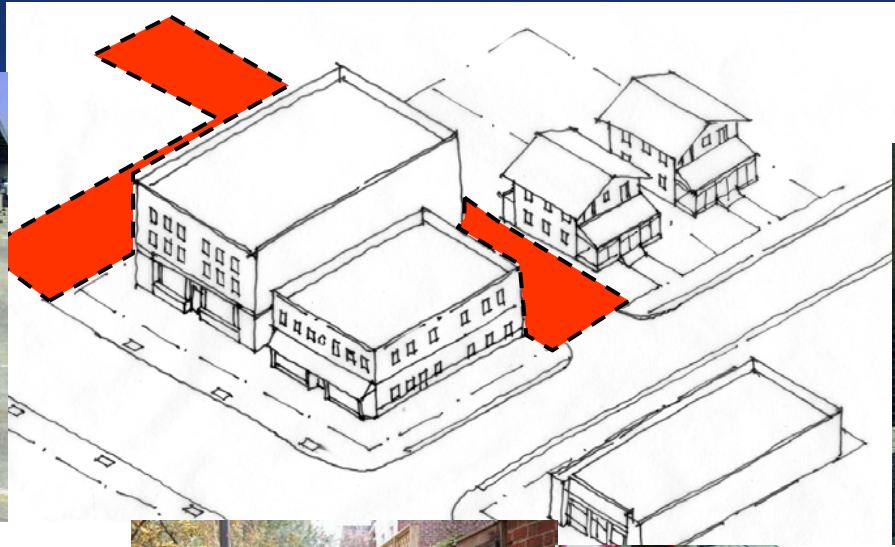


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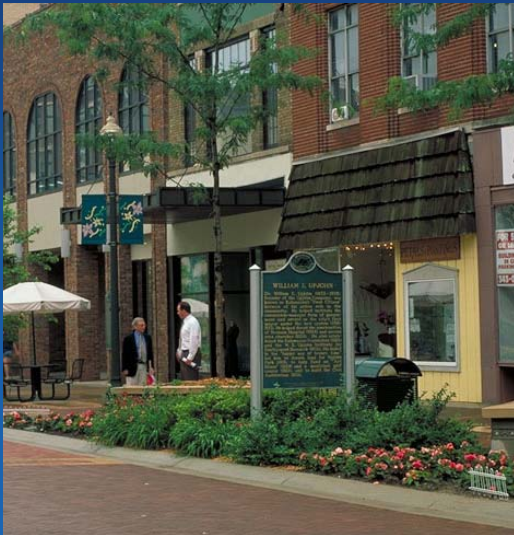
Ensure Protection of Residential Neighborhoods

Step buildings to minimize impact on residential neighborhood

Provide variety of buffer/screening options to mitigate visual impact of commercial development



Public and Private Improvements



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Town Square

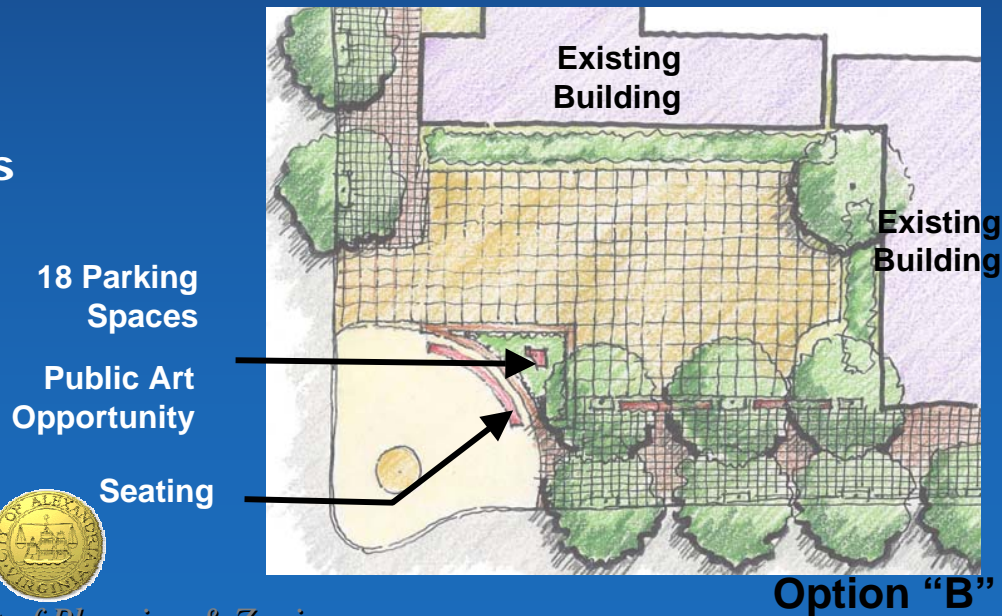
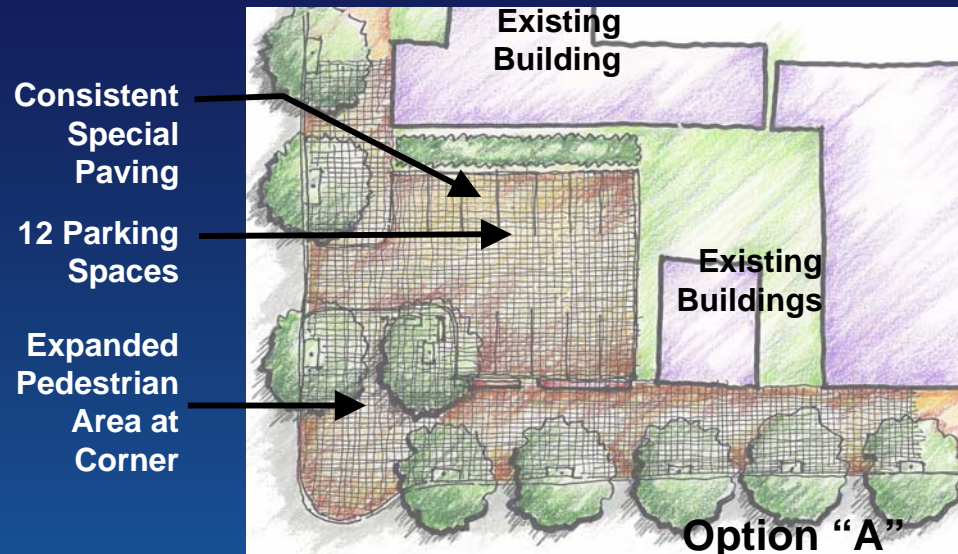
Create an attractive and flexible public gathering space

Option A: Redesign existing city parking lot and sidewalks at Mt. Vernon Avenue and Oxford

Option B: Redesign and expand existing city parking lot to the south (acquire parcel to the south)

Design Features

- Create flexible space that can serve daily gathering area, parking needs and special events
- Provide seating – benches and low walls
- Implement improved paving material
- Opportunity for public art



Parking Study

Current Parking Utilization and Demand

- 459 total spaces (on Avenue, select private lots, residential streets within one block of Avenue)

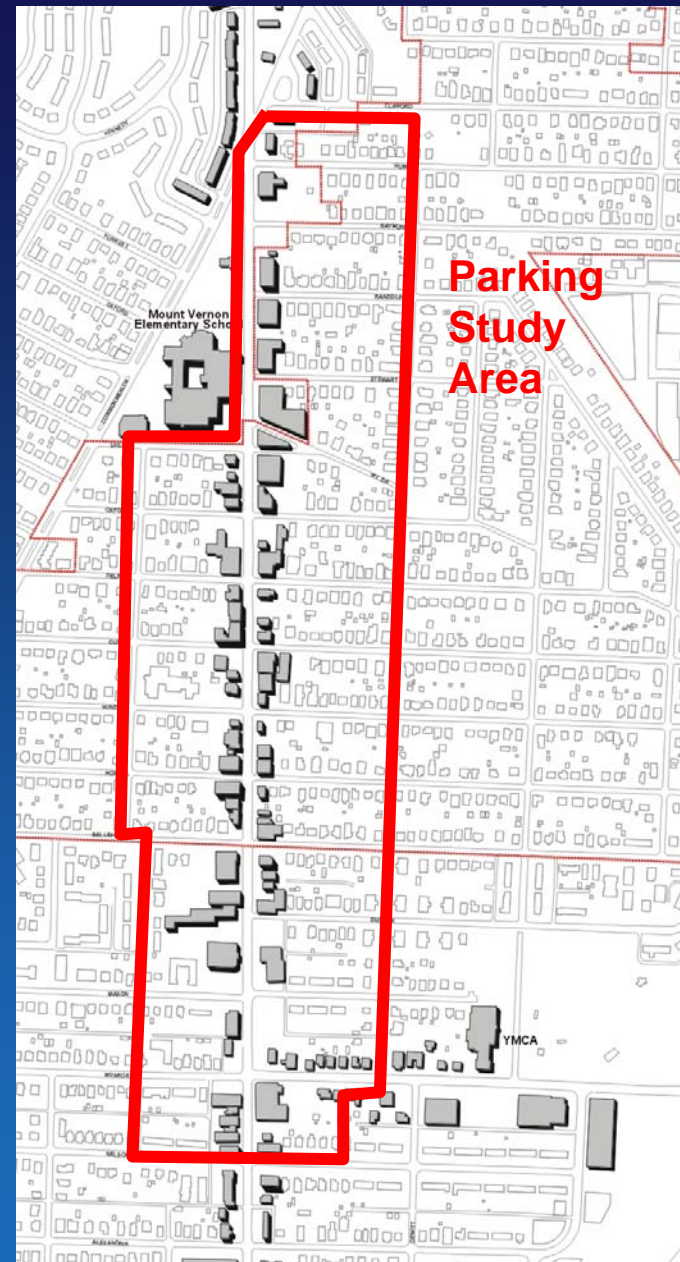
82 spaces on Avenue and 197 on selected lots (279 total)

- 40-70% parking in historic core occupied
- 140-262 unused spaces in core depending on day/time

40-70% unused spaces located in private lots

Parking Supply and Demand in Balance

As change and new construction occur, allow flexibility in parking while maintaining an overall balance



Parking Strategy

Shared parking program

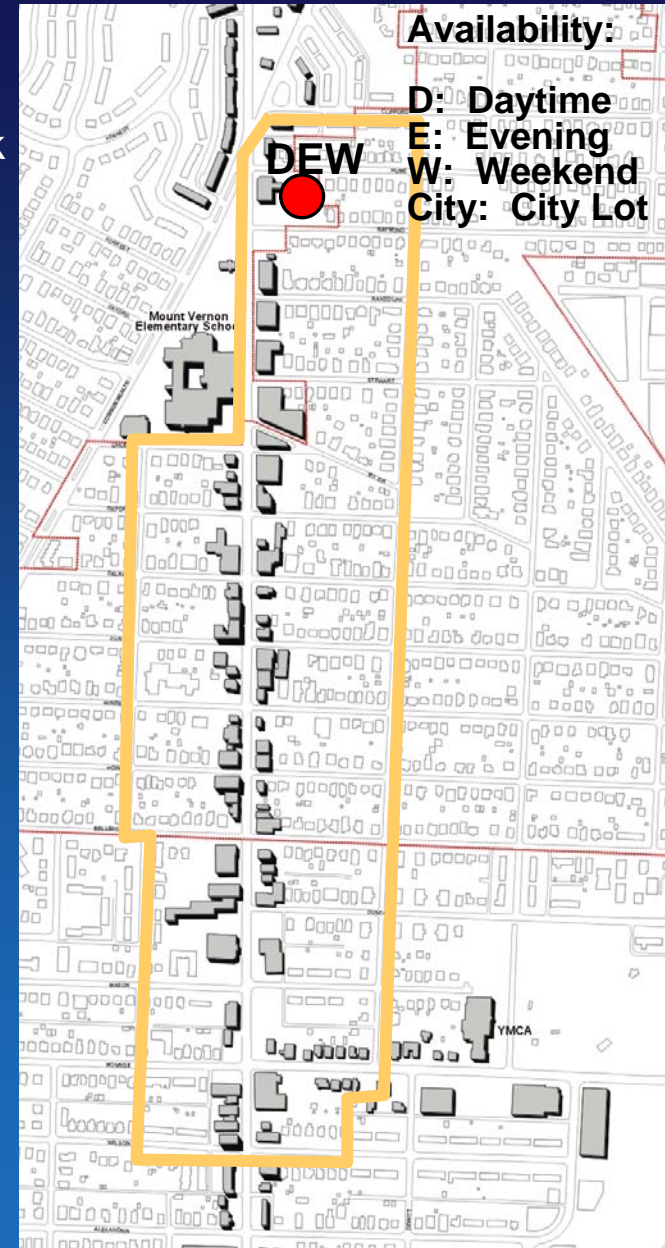
- Use 10 lots for employee parking to allow customers to park on Avenue and afford greater turnover of spaces for customers
- Implementation Issues: compensation, liability, maintenance, lighting, education, signage
- Organization to address issues, monitor parking, promote shared parking program

Parking overlay district

- Waive the increase in requirements for changes in use from office and personal service to retail
- Waive parking for outdoor seating at restaurants/cafes
- Small lots/additions reduce on-site requirement by 50% for compatible infill development and additions
- No reduction for tear downs of existing buildings or larger lots

Greater enforcement of existing parking limitations

Rear yard access or rights of way from alleys

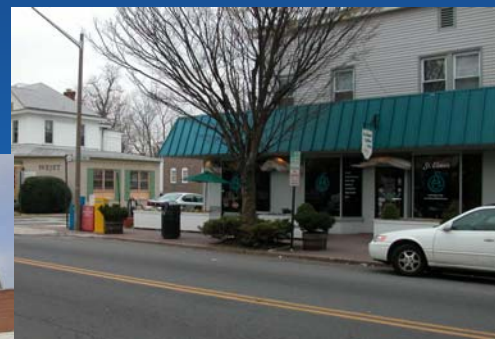


Parking Strategy

Monitor parking utilization and determine when additional parking strategies are necessary to meet increased demand

Develop thresholds for utilization that trigger more proactive response to parking demand:

- Install meters along Avenue and residential permit parking in neighborhood
- Establish public/private partnership to develop new parking



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Implementation



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Strengthen and Capitalize on Partnerships

- **City of Alexandria**
 - Implement capital improvements in partnership with private property improvements
 - Implement changes to zoning
 - Update design guidelines
 - Support the funding for façade improvements
 - Implement coordinated parking strategy
- **Alexandria Economic Development Partnership (AEDP)**
 - Market the Avenue
 - Implement façade improvement program
- **Small Business Development Center**
 - Assist with development of business plans
 - Services to strengthen existing businesses
- **Potomac West Business Association (PWBA)**
 - Market the Avenue
 - Support programming of the Avenue
 - Coordinate with the property owners
- **Neighborhood Groups**
 - Support businesses and activities
 - Support plan and plan implementation



